

## Clement Chamberlain Cafferata

**C**lement Chamberlain Cafferata was born on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1885 at 23 Millgate, Newark on Trent, Nottinghamshire, the tenth child out of thirteen born to his parents Redmond and Ellen Cafferata. <sup>(1)</sup> In 1881, Redmond had taken over the running of the family plaster and gypsum



SERGEANT CLEMENT CAFFERATA,  
Canadian Forestry Corps and 148th Duke of Connaught's Own.  
Born 1885. O. S. 1905.  
Died on Active Service, February 8th, 1919.

mining company, building up the firm to a high level of prosperity. A reflection of this commercial success came in the family's move to Irnham Hall, in Lincolnshire where, in 1891, Redmond's large family were looked after by a governess and nine servants. <sup>(2)</sup>

**R**edmond sent most of his sons away to boarding school, and Clement was no exception, following his brothers Cyril and Bernard to Downside School, starting there in April 1896. Clement stayed at Downside for nine years, leaving in July 1905. The Downside magazine, The Raven, said of Clement; "he excelled in Natural History studies. He was also looked upon by his companions as an authority on angling. He was a very keen long-distance runner, and would often get a set together for a run." <sup>(3)</sup>

**A**lthough he was by now 20 years old, Clement went from Downside to Stonyhurst, starting there in October 1905 as a "philosopher". The Philosophers at Stonyhurst were young men who were actually studying degree courses. (They studied at Stonyhurst because, until 1894, there were a number of difficulties with being a Catholic at a secular university.) The Stonyhurst Magazine reported; "He was a cheery, energetic boy, very fond of games and sports, and a most enthusiastic angler. With his fellow Philosophers he was always very popular. He took a prominent part with them in plays and other representative reunions." <sup>(4)</sup> Along with his brother Cyril he was a member of the Philosophers' Golf Team for 1905-1906.

**A**fter leaving Stonyhurst in April 1907, Clement studied medicine at Edinburgh University, gaining First Class Honours in Practical Anatomy and a Second Class Certificate in Physiology. At some point though, Clement decided that he didn't want to become a doctor and left at the end of his second year.

**F**rom Edinburgh, Clement made a complete change in career: He emigrated to Canada, arriving at Saint John, New Brunswick in November 1909 aboard the Empress of Britain. <sup>(5)</sup> In Canada he tried a number of jobs, including prospecting for Mica and starting his own land agency. Finally he went to Cortes Island, near Vancouver, where he farmed and continued to indulge in his hobby of Angling. <sup>(4)</sup> In the census of 1911 he was living in South Vancouver and was described as an odd job labourer.

**O**n the 6<sup>th</sup> October 1915 he married Marion Fennell Fraser (who was originally from Scotland) and the couple set up home together in Vancouver. Only a few weeks later though, Clement enlisted in the Canadian army, joining the Duke of Connaught's Own 158<sup>th</sup> Battalion on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 1915. <sup>(6)</sup>

**H**e completed his training and was sent to England, arriving on the S.S. Olympic on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 1916. In England he was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Reserve Battalion <sup>(7)</sup> and he was joined by Marion who arrived Second Class, aboard the ship New York, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December. <sup>(8)</sup> Marion went to live in Lincolnshire, not far from the Cafferata family in Newark and close to Clement's childhood home.

**C**lement transferred to the Canadian Forestry Corps in February 1917: "The Canadian Forestry Corps undertook various tasks including clearing land for airfields, preparing railway ties and lumber for use in trenches, building barracks and hospitals as well as farming...The Canadians produced 70% of allied lumber used during WWI." <sup>(5)</sup> He was posted to France in March 1917 and he spent most of the remainder of the war there, save for infrequent spells of leave, before returning to England permanently at the beginning of 1919. <sup>(7)</sup>

**U**nfortunately though, the end of hostilities did not bring the end of tragedy and, like many millions of others Clement was caught in the dreadful influenza epidemic of 1919. Clement

fought illness bravely – "He had evidently held out till the last moment, as he was only in the hospital a few hours. He was expecting to get home to see his wife, and no doubt would fear that if he reported 'sick' he would be detained." <sup>(4)</sup>

However, Clement Chamberlain Cafferata died on February 8<sup>th</sup> 1919 at the 14<sup>th</sup> Canadian General Hospital, Eastbourne, Sussex. His cause of death was given as either Pleurisy or Pneumonia. <sup>(9)</sup>



*Clement's Grave in Newark*

**H**is body was taken to Newark where he was buried in the family plot next to his brother Wilfred. Marion remained in Britain for a few months before returning to Canada. She paid frequent visits to England over the next few years but she never remarried and died in Vancouver in 1954.



*Front and Rear of a memorial card issued for Clement*

## Notes

1. Clement Cafferata, birth certificate issued 10<sup>th</sup> October 1885.
2. 1891 Census RG12/2555/69 P 4
3. The Raven, December 1905
4. Stonyhurst Magazine Number 223, July 1919
5. Campbell River Genealogy Society:  
[www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~bccrgc/cenotaph/CCCafferata.html](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~bccrgc/cenotaph/CCCafferata.html)
6. Clement Cafferata Attestation Paper 645028
7. Clement Cafferata Service Record 645028
8. UK Incoming Passenger Lists 3/12/1916
9. Pleurisy: Service Record 645028. Pneumonia: Death Certificate No: DYC 066742